

~~INFORMATION REPORT~~

CD NO.

COUNTRY Portugal

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DATE DISTR. 18 MAY 49

SUBJECT Prominent Portuguese Leftist Personalities

NO. OF PAGES 2 25X1A2g

PLACE 25X1A6a

ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO

25X1X6

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

1. Jose de Sousa COELHO, prominent Portuguese leftist leader, and Dr. Victor Hugo Velez GRILLO, leader of a group of moderate intellectual Communists, held a series of meetings in Portugal with the alleged French representative of the Cominform, Pierre du Conte LAVOISIER, during the month of February. The following persons were present at some of the meetings.
2. Miguel Wagner RUSSEL - one of the most active functionaries of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP). He is forty-one years old and married to Irene BARTOLO, sister of Oliver Branco BARTOLO, a former leading Communist. RUSSEL never completed the law studies which he had begun because at the age of twenty-two he joined the Communist Party and thereafter was in constant difficulty with the police. A short time later he became a paid functionary of the Party. RUSSEL has made several trips to France as a representative of the PCP in conferences with the French Communist Party; he has also made two trips to London and one to Russia. In 1932 RUSSEL was a secretary to the director of the Lisbon penitentiary, but fled from this post when he was discovered by the police. About that time he became one of the directors of the International Red Aid and a member of the Executive Committee of the PCP. In 1936 RUSSEL was the PCP's representative on a committee of sailors who were organizing a revolt in the Portuguese fleet; the revolt broke out in September 1936. In 1937 he was arrested and sent to Tarrafal. In 1945 RUSSEL returned to Lisbon and with the help of the PCP he set up a book store and small publishing house, later known as Edicoes Claridade, which specialized in political works of extreme leftist tendencies. In 1948 the book shop was closed by the judicial police. The PCP then considered sending him to Mozambique to set up a Communist Party there, but the international situation was such that the Party decided to keep him in Portugal. In Communist circles RUSSEL is considered one of the most active and intelligent leaders, with great organizing ability and remarkable linguistic facility.
3. Julio de Melo FOGACA - In 1934 when he was the delegate of the Red Aid of Communist Youth to the Central Committee of the PCP he was arrested and eventually sent to Tarrafal. (Date of his release from Tarrafal not known.)

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Next Review Date: 2008

Approved For Release 1999/09/09 : CIA-RDP82-00457R002700680006-6

Classified TO: TS
DDA Memo, 1 Apr 77
Auth: DDA REG. 77/1163
Date: 16 MAY 1978 By: [Signature]

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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4. Ariosto MESQUITA - Born 1911. He joined the PCP in 1929. In 1932 while he was performing his military service in a machine-gun unit, he took part in a revolutionary attempt which failed. He fled to Spain where he stayed, living in Madrid and Barcelona, until 1935. While in Spain MESQUITA acted as a machine-gun instructor to various groups of political refugees there. At the insistence of the PCP he returned to Portugal and was arrested two months after his arrival; in 1937, he was sent to Tarrafal, after having been imprisoned at Peniche and Angra do Heroismo. MESQUITA was released in 1942 and returned to Lisbon, where at the direction of the PCP, he joined the Socialist Party. He has been a salesman for the pharmaceutical products of the Wander Laboratories since October 1948. Previously he had held a similar position with another laboratory for about four years. Prior to that he was an assistant cameraman at Cinelandia Filmes. He is considered to be above average in intelligence.

5. Antonio Afonso PEREIRA - Controls a clandestine syndicate of railroad workers. Born 1900. In 1919, as a third-class worker employed by the Portuguese Railways, PEREIRA took active part in a railroad strike which collapsed after about a month. Following the strike he was dismissed by the company and signed up for the Angola Railways. He stayed there until 1925, when an amnesty allowed him to return to the Portuguese company. From 1926 until 1930 he was an ardent worker for the syndicates and trade unions in general. He was considered intelligent and active, and gained the confidence of masses of railroad workers. In 1930 he joined the PCP. In 1931 PEREIRA was appointed Secretary General of the Railroad Workers Syndicate, where his prestige and influence were great. In the general strike in 1934 he was arrested and sent to Tarrafal. He was released in 1942 and returned to Lisbon, immediately resuming his activity in the PCP. At present he is employed by the Empresa Geral de Transportes in the rua do Arsenal.

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